



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

the Beethoven one. The last movement I might almost call a thorough failure. No doubt we may occasionally find in Auber, Meyerbeer, and others, noise of this description, but there is plenty of better and worthier music to paralyze such influences, and to make it difficult to understand the bitter intention of the movement. Spohr can hardly complain that he himself is not valued, for amongst good names his is always to be found, in a thousand places daily.—Apart from this it is unnecessary to say that the construction of the separate movements, with, perhaps, the exception of the last, is admirable, especially the instrumentation which is employed with the most happy art to develop the idea of the whole work, and is well worthy of the master.

On the public in general the Symphony seemed to make no impression, unless, perhaps, it was an unfavorable one. It will shortly appear in print, when every one will be able to form an opinion on this *curiosity*, for such it undoubtedly is and will remain.

2. SYMPHONIES, NOS. 6 AND 7. 1843.

I have but little to add, even now that I know the work in print, to the above remarks on the Historical Symphony, written immediately after receiving my first impressions of it. Delicate and charming touches will always discover themselves in every one of Spohr's works the better one becomes acquainted with him, and I therefore desire somewhat to soften my former judgment on the last movement, to which I then imputed an ironical intention, whereas its reflection of our own times now seems to me less harsh than it then did. But have not many things altered in the last three years? Even Spohr himself would surely write differently now. Yes, I hope so; and I also hope that the evening of the life of this worthy master will be lighted up by the first rays of a better day than that which he characterizes in the *Finale* before us.

Spohr's best defence in his own latest Symphony (No. 7, Op. 121), to which we must now devote a few words. In many respects it is a remarkable work, and in its peculiar origin, form, and style of expression can only be compared to his own earlier one, *The Consecration of Sound*. As there, so here, he has chosen to write on a theme. This theme he describes in rather general terms in the title as *Irdisches und Gottliches im Menschenleben*—"The human and divine in life." It is worked out in three movements, each of which, again, has its separate motto. The first describes childhood; the second, the dangers of youth, and of manhood in its prime; the third, the triumph of good over evil. I confess to a prejudice against creations of this kind, which I probably share with hundreds of wisacres who have the strangest notions about composing, and are always referring us to Mozart, who, they say, "never meant anything by his music." No doubt, as I say, many people, both learned and unlearned, have this prejudice; and, therefore, when a composer hands me a programme with his music, I should say, "The first thing I want to hear is that your music is good, after that I shall be glad to see your programme." But as Goethe's writing poetry to given rhymes is a very different thing from some one else's doing it, so no amount even of philosophizing will succeed in destroying the beauties of Spohr's Symphony, just because his setting himself an exceptional task is not the same thing as when a beginner in the art

does so. But all this has been gone over again and again when we spoke of the *Weihe der Tone*, and the dispute as to whether composers should or should not think of some particular subject whilst composing is again reviving. The philosophizers think worse of the matter than need be; they are certainly mistaken if they imagine that a composer, when he has got his subject, sits down like a parson to his sermon on a Saturday afternoon, dividing it into the usual three parts, and then duly working it out; they certainly are wrong there. With the musician it is quite different; and whatever pictures or ideas may be floating in his mind he will only feel happy in his work when beautiful melodies come to him, borne by the same invisible hands as the "golden buckets" of which Goethe speaks somewhere. Therefore, keep your prejudice, but at the same time look into things, and do not let a master suffer for the incompetence of learners.

Not to waste words, there is a charm about this last Symphony of Spohr's that can hardly be found in any other. One cannot say that it contains any particularly great or new thoughts, different to what we have already heard before in Spohr; but such serenity and purity of sound is not easily met with elsewhere. No doubt the charm of the coloring is heightened by the employment of two orchestras—an idea, by the way, that every one does not hit upon, or at any rate, does not carry out, for, if it requires a master to conduct one orchestra, how much greater must he be to deal with two! It is not likely, nor indeed is it greatly to be wished, that this proceeding should be much imitated. How interesting to speculate on what Beethoven would have made of such an idea! Surely one might expect something most gigantic. For my part, I believe he would not even have made use of it; it is much better suited to a tender delicate nature like Spohr's than to the mighty Beethoven. It was Spohr also who wrote the first double quartette, as we have already mentioned. There are, then, two orchestras at work in the Symphony, one of them being rather obligato in character, with no brass or drums, and only one of each instrument; the other (with the exception of the oboes and bassoons, which also are single), has the usual number of instruments. This unaccustomed form of instrumentation will naturally prevent the work from being performed in many places, though in other respects it is not so difficult as the *Weihe der Tone*.

Among other unusual things in this Symphony is the form and order of the movements. The first, a picture of happy childhood, is an *allegretto* with a slow introduction—and to this one I should give the prize; green meadows spread themselves before us, and hosts of children are playing together under a cloudless sky, while all the while the sad smiling eyes of the master seem to be looking on, full of recollections of his own childhood. The second movement—already mentioned in connection with the motto at the head of it—conveys well what is intended; a prelude full of doubts and difficulties is followed by a passionate *allegro*; and here, again, the presence of the noble master himself is felt, bemoaning the errors of his favorite—the hero of the Symphony. There is one passage in this movement which seems to me not to produce the full effect which the composer had promised himself—namely, the violin solo of the first orchestra, which is overpowered by the superior numbers of the

second orchestra, and sounds poor. It would have been easy to give this part more power; but the composer seems to lay particular stress upon its being played by a solo violin, and the idea is intelligible. The conductor must be careful to moderate the loudness of the second orchestra.

In the third movement the composer is quite in his element—the evil one is vanquished, and the power of good is triumphant. The subjects recall other things of Spohr's—namely, the last movement of the trio in E minor, written about the same time, and the finale reminds one of the *Finale* in the *Weihe der Tone*, without thereby failing to leave an impression of beauty and elevation.

Thus closes the master. Let us follow him in his art, in his life, and in all his endeavors. The industry shown in every line of the score is most touching. May he ever be a shining example to us amongst the greatest of our countrymen!

(From the London Musical World, July 20th.)

A SETTLED FACT. IN THREE PARTS.

PART 1.—PIANOFORTES AT THE FRENCH EXHIBITION.—We perceive that the Gold Medal has been awarded to Messrs. John Broadwood and Sons, for the pianofortes sent by them to the Paris Exhibition. It must be gratifying to the proprietors of this well-known firm to feel that the verdict of the English public on the qualities of their instruments has been confirmed by a competent musical tribunal in Paris.

PART 2.—STEINWAY & SONS, of New York, having gained the First Gold Medal for American pianofortes, Madame La Baronne James Rothschild immediately bought one of their finest "Grands" for her Château de Ferrieres.

PART 3.—PIANO-FORTES AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION.—The public award of medals was to have taken place July 1st. The Paris correspondent of the *New York Weekly Review* states that Messrs. Steinway & Sons, of New York, will receive the first medal; Broadwood, of London, the second; and Messrs. Chickering & Sons, of Boston, the third. (The Paris correspondent of the "*Weekly Review*" is — inexact—A. S. S.)

BADEN-BADEN.—With the exception of three Quartet *Soirées*, given by the Florentine society, including Herr Jean Becker and colleagues, who have afforded great satisfaction to a small but most select public, there have been as yet no concerts of any importance in the Conversationshaus. Mad. Pauline Viardot-Garcia, however, has long since resumed her Sunday *Matinées*, to which all the leading artists and the principal visitors enjoy—free admission. The Queen of Prussia and the Grand Duchess of Baden have been to several of the *Matinées*.—The Theatre was opened a few days since by the company from the Royal Opera-house, Stuttgart, who proposed giving three performances.—The Italian operatic season will commence on the 8th August, and extend up to the 14th September. The artists engaged are: Signore Vitali, Grossi, Signori Nicolini, Delle Sedie, Zucchini and Agnesi. Among the works performed will be *Crispino e la Comare*, *Ernani*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Linda di Chamounix*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and *Faust* (by Gounod).